FELLOWSHIP IN PRAYER

Volume XXII, Number 2, April 1971

FELLOWSHIP IN PRAYER

Founded by Carl Allison Evans (1880-1956)

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Our purpose: To promote the practice of prayer among all religious faiths whose fundamental belief is in God, regardless of race, creed, or color, and whose tenets include the universal attributes of truth, honesty, justice and mercy, that thereby there may arise a closer relation to Almighty God and a deeper spirit of fellowship among mankind.

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GREAT PEOPLE I HAVE KNOWN

In the course of my life I have known six people who have struck me as great. I don't mean charming, good company, or extraordinarily talented or brainy or hard-working or successful, or even just plain enviable or admirable or superior. I mean great. This judgment of mine has always been extremely personal, involved no doubt with my own inner necessities, and it has always been very vivid, immediate, and, once made, permanent. It is hard to say exactly what sum-total of visible virtues rings up such a judgment. I'm sure it has little to do with accomplishment or fame. I know it has a lot to do with sweetness of nature and with the good manners of the soul which are known as courtesy. As I think about it, I see it is connected with a certain reticence, although I don't mean the shyness which is the usual (not very effective) cover-up for arrogance or the awkward dumbness of those without courage. It also goes with "fineness," to use an obsolete word that contains for me more of an aura than a definite meaning. And with decency. And, always, with intelligence. In order to express the greatness of these six human beings I am obliged to tell you my feelings when I have been in their company—every time it has felt like surprise, like delight. Why, my feeling was, this is the way everybody is supposed to be!

One is an internationally celebrated writer, the daughter of an internationally celebrated musician, who has spent a lifetime with those creative people who—on account of their works or ideas —will be remembered as long as our century is; she herself will be; and no doubt one reason for her celebrity (the world occasionally is just) is the rare womanly wisdom with which, always smiling, always on the verge of softest laughter, she understands the world and every last one of us in it.

A second great person, also famous, is a man, a poet from New England. He is possessed by such a drastic integrity to himself and his own values—and these are of a continuous seriousness —that he finds it impossible (this is visible the moment you meet

him) to create relationships with people at the silly, careless, muddled, trivial level at which they feel easy. This "land of unlikeness," as he ruefully describes it, forces him to live with a continual sense of being different from all others. Yet his inward regard for others never fails, nor does his politeness, and he perseveres in his effort to communicate what he has learned about life, about people living it, and about their relationship with God above.

Great talents don't necessarily go with great characters, however. Since things are as they are, I have not been astonished to find most of my great friends outside of the world that is publicized.

Known only locally in the town I live in is my third great human being, a black lady born down South sixty-some years ago without advantages, hopes, or even parents. In the first half of her life she almost went under. "I hated people," she says, "I wouldn't talk to nobody." But then, sixteen years ago, she had a spiritual awakening and not only started to talk to people but gave herself completely to helping others, black and white, poor and rich, drunk and sober, good and bad, whoever might be in trouble. Her talent is cooking, she has earned her living by it, and for everyone who asks her help her table is always laden with good things to eat, fried chicken, roast beef, blackeyed peas, butter beans cooked with a piece of ham, cakes, and sweet-potato pie; and across the table she waits to stuff her guest also with her own hilarious good humor, her tough-minded experience of the worst of life, her incredible sensitivity.

Another, the fourth, is a man of numberless talents and brains like fireworks, a writer and editor, who nearly wrecked his abilities and career and life by his addiction to alcohol. After a struggle that lasted into his fifties, he became able to turn his unmanageable life over to God, sobered up, rejoined the Quaker meeting in which he was reared, and now devotes what leisure he has to helping others who—like his younger self—are trying without success to escape alcohol, drugs, insanity. As a result of his transformation, he has not entered a heaven of security from the financial and emotional turmoil wrought by his earlier misadventures. Yet there

he sits, pouring out all his hard-earned wisdom faster than he can talk, his grandfatherly whiskers never still, his brave humor never giving out, his serenity never dimmed.

My fifth great person is young enough to dress like a hippie. Several years short of thirty, he is a horticulturalist, husband and recent father, and possesses the inner stillness of a sage, also the kindness. He seems almost too much to believe. He seems to be a very good omen for the future. The fact is that he arrived at his problems early—aged ten—and learned his wisdom in reform school, hospitals, and other state institutions.

Sixth is a relative of mine, now aging, who has survived a lifetime of troubles by means of a faith in God that permits her to spend her final years in the happy sweetness and trust of a little girl, a smile blooming continually on her lips.

Six lives. And six lifetimes of troubles. It goes without saying that every one of them had troubles—the cook because of her black skin and infuriated delicacy of pride, the poet because of the unbearable fact that he is different from everybody else on earth, the hippie as a result of the pleasure he got from drugs, which he describes as "the kick you get from feeling nothing."

I have talked with all six about their troubles. Each is convinced that, without them, awful and almost-disastrous though they were, he or she could not have found the way to sanity and serenity. Only in their troubles did they find a despair violent enough to oblige them to try to change themselves and seek something else—that very quality, I'm certain, which strikes me as their common greatness.

It is an old idea that troubles and difficulties are necessary for the tempering of a human being's character. It's coming back into style. I think this is fortunate. For it is in times of my own trouble that I do most of my thinking about these six people. Their perseverance and triumphs make the living of my life easier for me, above all more hopeful. Because, as I say, it is really not that the six are so very special or remarkable. It is that some of us have not yet learned the wisdom of acceptance and the daily if not hourly necessity of asking God to restore our sanity.

— P. G.

A TOUCH *Thomas O. Perkins*

One day
God touched my soul
And left
His fingerprints.

SOLITUDE *Mildred Long*

Deep in the wood a shining lake
Of windless shadows lies,
Waveless, still, and deep.

And on its shore the pine trees stand
Reaching toward the skies:
Silent, and calm, as in sleep.

Beyond, like guardian sentinels,
Mountains, white, and wise—
A faithful watch they keep.

THE QUEST *Erica May Brooks*

Out of the vast immensity and density of the capacity of our comprehension today; may we seek and seeking find, and finding keep,—the utter simplicity of the whole. Lasting solstice, solace and sacristy for the soul.

A FRAGILE MOMENT

My eight-year-old daughter had been learning the truths of answered prayer in Sunday School. During this period we had to make a quick trip into town for her Brownie uniform. We were going to a new store, in which I hadn't previously shopped, and I had no idea as to the parking situation around it.

I said to Shannon, "I don't have a single coin in my purse for the parking meter."

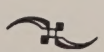
Without hesitation she answered, "Why don't you ask Jesus for a parking space where you don't need money?"

To show her that I meant business I audibly asked, "Dear Jesus, we don't have any coins for the meter. We need a parking space. We'll place it in your hands. Thank you and Amen."

I swung around the block, and right across the street was our utilities company with one empty unmetered parking space.

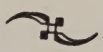
Shannon's eyes flew open to the size of pie plates. "Mama, Mama! He heard us! Jesus heard us, and He answered our prayer!"

Of course it would be easy to say that the parking space would have been there regardless of my request to the heavens. But, after two thousand years, a little child is still doing the leading.



WELL-SPRING (Pearlee) *Mary L. Wantner*

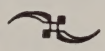
The true source of power is prayer,
True companionship with God,
Source Supreme, to meet each need
Of trial and triumph, woe;
Power to sustain, console,
Is His, alone, to give.
Prayer is the true source of power.



TONIGHT I GO *Howard G. Hanson*

I will not ask from whence your trust
nor where the bud hides from the bloom,
but take your gift because I must
renew the pledge now nearer home.

Death grows more real, but life slides past
a truth too soon; tonight I go
a distance never trod, and cast
my rose beyond the steps I know.



AN AFRICAN PRAYER OF THE XIX CENTURY
(Written by a Christian martyr, Charles De Foucauld, who was killed by an eight-year-old Tuareg boy who had never used a rifle before, in Tamanrassett in the Sahara.)

Almighty God, who sees everything, even the smallest little black ant on the blackest rock in the darkest blackness of the night, You who can count the grains of sand in the immense Sahara, You, who made Yourself known to me in the glorious magnificence of Your creation, give me confidence that the destiny You have reserved for me to help others is the best for my soul and the soul of all others, enlighten me so that I can help everyone who needs help, that I can give everyone who asks, open my door to everyone who knocks, and give me strength that I can let everybody know to look upon me as their humble universal brother. Amen.

(Courtesy of the Honorable Dr. Marion Mill Preminger)

FORGOTTEN LAUGHTER, FORGOTTEN PRAYER

W. H. Auden

I think that a lot of people have forgotten two of the three worlds I think essential for life. A number have forgotten how to laugh—and by that I don't mean the Voltairean smile of reason. I mean belly laughter, which I shall talk about in a moment as the spirit of carnival—and how to pray.

If I talk about prayer, I think the petitionary side of it is purely a preliminary, superficial thing, because it is quite involuntary. Naturally, we are always asking: Can I marry the girl I love? Can I sell my house? or whatever. But a prayer really begins at the point at which one listens to a voice. I am not going to argue with people about this; I would call it the voice of the Holy Spirit, you could call it the inner light. The only things you cannot call it, you cannot call it reason, and you cannot call it the superego, because the superego could never say anything new.

On the other side is what I would call—connected with laughter as I think of it—the spirit of carnival, as exemplified in the Saturnalia, in medieval carnival, and the Roman carnival brilliantly described by Goethe in February of 1776. In the world of the vita activa there is no question of equality. There is a special kind of equality in the case of prayer. In the case of carnival, there is complete equality.

Essentially, what is carnival about? Here the great writers about it are Rabelais and Dickens. It is a common celebration of our common fate as members of our species. Here we are, mortal, born into the world, we must die, and this applies to everybody, so that there is a mixture. This is what laughter also implies, because laughter is both an act of protest and an act of acceptance.

There is joy in the fact that we are all in the same boat, that there are no exceptions made. On the other hand, we cannot help wishing that we had no problems—let us say, that either we were in a way unthinking like the animals or that we were disembodied angels. But this is impossible; so we laugh because we simultaneously protest and accept.

It seems to me, for example, that the hippies are trying—and quite

rightly because this tends to disappear in a technological civilization—to revive the spirit of carnival. Unfortunately, it will fail, I think, insofar as they reject the active life of work in between.

Trying to think about what changes have come about through astronomy and physics in our position in the physical universe, I look at it this way. It is true—and from a Christian point of view this seems to me essential—that it is absolutely right that the physical universe should exist as if God did not exist. It has to be purged of all kinds of polytheism, which is then expecting, on the earth, God to do for us what we are supposed to do for him. Just as Adam was put in the Garden of Eden to dress it, we are here to look after the universe. By that I think that one has to help the universe realize goals which it cannot realize itself.

If I want to use an analogy, I say that in regard to the inorganic universe, I see our relation rather like that of a sculptor. No sculptor whom I have ever spoken to thinks of enforcing his forms on nature. He thinks: "I lay bare, I realize in a stone, a form that is latently there.

I think we might have a decent world if it were universally recognized that to make a hideous lampshade, for example, is to torture helpless metals. And that every time we make a nuclear weapon, we corrupt the morals of a host of innocent neutrons below the age of consent.

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FOR ONE VERY YOUNG MET TODAY *Emily Sargent Councilman*

I see myself at seventeen in you;
your frightened questing eyes could be my own.
O let this word, unspoken, filter through
our fragile moment shared: you're not alone.

THE CHOICE OF THE SAGE

Mark Halpern

Deep within the profoundest depths of every soul is an inexhaustible fount of divine beauty. There, in the hidden sanctuary of our inner being, we need but to fill the chalice of the heart and drink of the gushing pure waters of creative inspiration. And then it is, having once drunk at the magic fount within, that we behold the the radiance of the All-Pervading Transcendent Beauty in and through all life, regardless of the outer veiling phenomena of appearances.

Some of us are more adept than others in finding the way to that innermost wondrous fount of divine beauty. Indeed, throughout the ages, there have been but comparatively few who regularly availed themselves of those illuminating waters, quenching their thirst for the True, the Beautiful and the Good; and sharing the revelation vouchsafed to them, with all their fellow men. These are the great immortal poets.

It would seem that two of the prime essentials in discovering the divine fount of beauty are high aspiration to live according to one's loftiest ideals and principles and an earnest desire to seek after Truth. These, together with a life rich in trying experiences that have served to refine the individual organism until it has become sensitized to the eternal verities, are the guiding lights to the magic fount.

The greatest poets are not they who always live in a pleasant secluded atmosphere of comfort and beauty, never allowing the hem of their spotless white robes to be stained by the ugliness of mortal life in the raw; but they who transmute, in the crucible of suffering, the ugliness of appearances into the beauty of the One Eternal and Imperishable Reality. And true it is that the souls who have suffered the deepest wounds and yet gone on to victorious living in spite of them are the immortals ranking highest in the realm of poesy.

But we have always misunderstood our poets. Though we often find serenity and inspiration and even enlightenment in the

rhythmic strains of their verse, yet secretly, if not outwardly, we hold them to be a bit mad and completely out of step with this utilitarian world. Thus it is that many a true poet has been neglected or scorned during his lifetime. The recognition and immortality of our outstanding poetic geniuses has generally come to them after they have passed on to their rest in the Elysian fields.

So it was with blind Homer. During his life on earth, he had barely enough for his needs, being compelled to beg for food and shelter, often composing poems to pay for his meals. After he had passed on, seven cities in Greece claimed to be the place of his birth—the very cities where he had been wont to beg for his bread. And of the glory that was Greece all is gone except the immortal works of art, of which there are none greater than the epics of Homer.

It was Emerson who said, "All men are poets at heart." For at the central heart of hearts, deep within the soul of every human being, is the divine fount of the True, the Beautiful and the Good. Those who find that fount and drink of its crystal-clear purity henceforth behold the harmonious beauty of the all-pervading essence that is life eternal. And ever afterwards they will spontaneously express in their lives the wondrous beauty of that life everlasting; giving forth of the lofty sublimity of their consciousness in inspiring purple passages of sustained poetic living, until their very life shall become a poem—a beautiful living poem created of the self by the Divine Self.

To live a life of selfless service is indeed to be a Master Poet—as was Jesus of Nazareth. Not even a single line of poetry did he ever write with mere pen and mortal words. But by continually living selflessly, giving of himself to the utmost; serene within when all about him was confusion, and He himself the target of the poisonous arrows of ridicule, mockery, condemnation and misunderstanding; by drawing on the divine fount within for his strength, He, Jesus of Nazareth, gave to the world its most magnificent epic.

He wrote with His noble and beautiful way of living, with His very life, in undying words of celestial fire never to be forgotten.

So can we all, in time, become Master Poets.

One of the Poet-Sages of old India happened to be passing

through a town that boasted of its young poets. It was on a day of an important religious festival, at which the poets were to recite their own verses. Asked to preside as judge and thus help the elders determine who was the most gifted of their young men in the art of poesy, the old sage consented.

With his habitual gracious kindness and deep understanding, he allowed himself to be led into the court of the temple, where many were assembled to hear the fervent outpouring of verses from the hearts of the young poets.

Seating himself humbly among the others, he listened as one by one of the poets intoned their devotional verses of prayer to God. When the last had concluded, the venerable old sage fixed his gaze on a young man who had been sitting among the contesting poets but had not risen to recite.

"And thou, O silent one," prompted the sage, "hast thou no verses to intone?"

The young man shook his head. But his dark eyes were proud and happy as they watched one of the poets sitting beside him.

"'Tis not I who am a poet," he replied, "but my brother here. He is the poet in the family."

The sage nodded slowly, the wisdom of his deep-set eyes shining vividly, as though he already knew the information he was eliciting. "And what art *thou* in the family?" he questioned.

"I, O great sage," the young man said, "am not a poet. I help with the ordinary duties at home. I came here merely to witness the contest."

The sage smiled. "And thou hast discharged those duties without a word of complaint. Is it not true that for some years now, since the passing on of thy father, thou hast provided the food and shelter for thy mother and young sisters and thy poet brother, working hard at the bustling market place from morning until night; and also laboring in the evening hours before retiring for a few hours of sleep, using thy spare time in producing pottery to add to thine income?" Then, after a pause in which the light of those knowing eyes seemed to glow with clairvoyant brilliance: "But is it not also true that thou thyself once dreamt of becoming a great poet?"

The young man looked with startled eyes at the old sage. He opened his mouth as though to reply, then brought his lips together tightly.

Slowly the venerable Poet-Sage got to his feet and addressed those present:

"The young poets I have heard recite are all worthy of the high name of poet. But the greatest among them, the true poet of all, is this young man who sacrificed his own desires and aspirations toward that lofty calling so that his brother might attain it. For, through the nobility of his Selfless Love, he has created a living Poem of his own life. And it is only such creators of living Poems who are the true poets of life...."

Let me go
let me be free
no walls
fences
let me fly with the birds
through the grass the wind
through oceans
seas
mountains
and streams
and through the sands I'll roam
picking up sea shells
and snow flakes

all this is possible if I am free
to watch dying embers grow into ashes.

—*Casey Brandt*

BY THE LIGHT OF EACH NEW DAY

H. G. Woods

In the aftermath of an experience, there is a realization greater than ever before, and I have accepted life in a new light.

When one is cut off from the main stream of an interesting, active life with little or no warning, to find himself near death's door, he might ask himself such a question as: what did I do or not do to bring this state of being unto myself?

I was trying to do good each day, and in the evening summarized my day's work, feeling that it was not in vain and that some accomplishments were noteworthy. But the most unwary sense of my situation was that I lived too anxiously strained by initiative, rushing to meet the unseen turn of events. I was living beyond my time....

After certain symptoms of my illness became pronounced, I found myself rendered almost helpless. One of these still remains in memory, which I shall quote. One evening when two elders of the Gospel called on me, offering material assistance along with their prayers. While I was resting my head on a big soft chair, something happened never before experienced. I saw through a big black circle. My eyes were cast in utter darkness, totally encompassed for some time. (My heart was broken with sorrow.)

This being one of the darkest times of my life, it preyed on the mind until my nerves were shattered. Seemingly I was pulled apart. Indeed, I felt this pulling within, then a gradual coming together. This latter sensation led me to believe that in time I could recover.

Living alone, I tried to do for myself, but found I could no longer prepare meals. One morning, weak and shaky, I called the doctor at six-thirty. By nine o'clock he and my good neighbor were at my bedside. He said, "You have a severe problem. Could I hire a woman to come into the home and help you?" I could not afford one, so went into a nursing-home.

Here I got some rest, and meals prepared, but was given

an enormous amount of drugs, mainly to control the nerves and some for the infection I endured. These had little effect as a cure because of my suffering and the depressing atmosphere—seeing the maimed, crippled, and the elderly suffer. I grew worse; the tension was unbearable.

One midnight, with robe and slippers on, I staggered down a long corridor, cringing at every patient's door I passed, until I reached the nurse's station. (I feared the measure that might be taken against me.) They seated me, and gave me a hot cup of tea, and at three A.M. called my doctor, asking permission to give me a hypodermic. To give this they eased me back into my room. I was still pleading for help—for release, so one nurse sat beside me until morning. After a waitress brought my breakfast, I was advised to gather my clothes and all belongings, and move into a room next to the nurse's station.

Here, it was like before, I was given drugs, but had no sleep. Was I becoming a drug addict? I theoried when I was deathly nauseated and all the ones taken that night came up. I sensed then that a change must take place, and it was up to me to make the change.

I had stood alone with faith and reason before in a conflict of struggle, and now to rise and try it again. With fear and trembling (after losing forty pounds), I asked a nurse to call my doctor and make an appointment for me at ten-thirty next morning. She did, and my beloved Christian neighbor came and took me to his office.

I begged the doctor's permission to go home, and this he granted without one word in protest. After reaching the house and putting it in order with heat and the telephone reinstalled, then what a relief to crawl into my own bed! All drugs were discarded. There was no sedative needed. Peaceful sleep came naturally.

Life for me now took on a different aspect. I have risen from the grave of darkness into the light of resurrection and understanding. The spirit is no longer bound by bleakness. Friends are a warm affluence. Each day is a joyous beginning; it is an adventure unequivocally born anew. I think and live positively, free of straining to reach for something that might never be. Even night folds down in peace, where once the darkness strangled me.

TWO SPEECHES FROM 'VOICES FROM ETERNITY'

Winifred Hamrick Farrar

JUDAS

I, Judas, whisper on the wind, "My Lord,"
Since the night I kissed His cheek and left Him.
My shame descending like a shroud, the cord
Inviting me to swing upon the limb,
I hang today
And will forever,
Hearing His voice
Say "Friend."
And I was chosen, called, my agony
Reminds me constantly and separates
Me from His offered hand I cannot take.
I, Judas, whisper on the wind, "My Lord."

THOMAS

Watcher, I am Thomas who asked
The Lord for proofs, gave Him the task
Of tedious speeches,
Great reaches
Into infinity for inspiration.

From doubt, a final answer came to me.
Missing Jesus on resurrection day,
Not being with the rest in Galilee,
I had to see the prints to find the way
To God.
His simple invitation
To stretch out my hand,
To feel the spots
Broke my heart, making me cry in anguish
And joy, "My God." I learned the answer then
And understood the way that leads to life.
From doubt, a final answer came to me.

INSIGNIA

Pollyanna Sedziol

I am a little wary
of those
who constantly carry
a Bible
in their hands. . .

I prefer those who have
The Word
persistent in their hearts
and live it
in their lives.

LITTLE PRAYERS

Loreta Inman

A little prayer in the morning
For love to guide my way.

A little prayer in the nooning
My strength and song to stay.

A little prayer in the evening
To end a perfect day.

YOU BELONG

Berneice A. McCombs

Man is strange. The whole world can wait and pray, technicians can work the clock around, and even our enemies offer help when one of our spaceships becomes disabled in outer space. Man can learn the mysteries of his physical world but is unable to solve his own spiritual problems. Man seeks not to understand the many influences affecting his place in the scheme of things.

God likes cycles. A cycle is a continuous motion with no stopping or starting. God is the beginning and the end of His cycles, and each life will follow a certain design. In nature, the changes of seasons have their purpose to perform for each living thing. Fall, winter, spring, and summer repeat their seasons each year. Each year is four seasons and is a continuous cycle. Next, each living thing has a time for birth, growth, play, learning, a part of a family, middle age, problems of old age, and finally death. This applies to all. God included a balance of nature for each creation in His cycles. Each is dependent upon each other. Man needs each living thing, as each living thing needs the love and goodness of man. The change of seasons, life's training cycles for each creation, and a balance for all, show that God's universe contrains order, beauty, and a goal.

Many times our lives seem like a giant jigsaw puzzle with no meaning. Years ago it was a favorite pastime to fit pieces of a puzzle together. Our lives seem like the one piece that is supposed to fit but doesn't. It has the same color and nearly the same shape, but we end up looking for another piece. The other piece has a different color but the right shape and goes neatly into the puzzle. You ask yourself why a certain problem befalls your life. It seems to have no rhythm or reason either. Later you may discover that the problem piece has given you strength and a step forward. Remember, you do belong to a great plan.

Man's outside world is but a clue to his purpose in God's plan. God is spirit and a part of all His creations. God has a plan for each individual heart. The fall, winter, spring, and

summer seasons of your inner spiritual life is the process it takes to discover your heart's desire. God is the small voice whispering the secret wish that lies at the bottom of your heart. Sometimes your wish is dormant as in the cold of winter, but is in full bloom, as summer is, if you listen to God's whispering. Next, God will provide the education and training to equip you for your purpose. God has need of you. God will charge nothing for this education except that you do your heart's desire. The balance of your spiritual life lies in faith and love of God. You depend on Him and He depends on you. Again, you find the change of seasons, life's training cycles, and a balance that completes the inner spiritual world of man. It can contain order, beauty, and purpose. As outside around man so is inside spiritually.

God's plan includes each one. Why wouldn't you belong? There is order in His universe that leaves you with a free will to build this same order within yourself.

A small girl stood at the river's edge afraid to move. The force of the water was angry and fast-moving. Suddenly she heard a voice asking to take her hand. Her father took her hand and pulled her safely back on the bank away from the violently moving water. The small girl was thankful for the helping hand and her tensions had disappeared. God holds His hands out to each one of us. Won't you take it?

Religion is not a way of looking at certain things, but a certain way of looking at all things.

Let no man think to have set his own house in order if he is unmindful of his brother's well being. --St. John Chrysostom

FOR ANY UNLOVED TEENAGER

Carla Patsuris

Minus timber, rules and gauge
She builds dominion out of nothing much
All her goals hidden in the glow
Of expectation's fairyland

Not yet acquainted with the valley's green
She faces mountain steeps
With hopes upon the changing laurel hues;
No maps, no warning signs she'd understand

Uncertain and a little arrogant
Yet still young still sweet
With thoughts so new
They might be minted as she grows:

Love could make her strong and wise
Fear will mark her....
Heaven help help befriend her
There she goes.

You are on the brink of the New Age, and for this a New Race is being born. It is as though God had said to Himself: "This horrible beastliness and cruelty on earth must stop. I will build a new earth and people it with my saints, my masters and my adepts." You can read it all in the Bible; it speaks of the New Race and peace on earth for a thousand years.

Characteristics

Among the outstanding characteristics of these children is their courage—they are very brave. They cannot quite understand fear. They do not have to burn a candle when they go to bed—they like the dark. It is a time when they feel the angels near them. The angel-kingdom is close to them, so much part of their lives. Many parents have spoken about the peculiarities of one or two of these children: they seem to have a kind of hidden knowledge. They use words unusual for their years. Mothers have said, "When I was a child I was part of my parents' lives—but mine somehow stand apart." They are restless; they have in their souls a definite urge toward something—they know not what. They are frank and free; they say what they think and there is no pretence about them.

What has happened? Why are they like this? It is nothing to do with the war. It is part of the process of evolution. Youth is going to build a real world.

These children of the New Age are very difficult to manage but they have peculiar wisdom. Money means little to them and they will eventually take away the false value that money has in the world.

They have a wisdom that, as one mother said, is "uncanny." They have spiritual knowledge and no doubt at all. They are quick-tempered but they have a tremendous fund of love.

Beauty and the Arts

The New Race all love beauty and they all have artistic gifts. They will lead the world in creating beauty. They will banish the cult of ugliness: the ugly art, the ugly music, the ugly

architecture.... And because there is so much love in their hearts, they will be just and will provide equal opportunities for all people and leisure enough for them to enjoy the beauty they create.

You sometimes read of an infant prodigy. There was once a boy of ten who conducted a large orchestra. The boy's name was Mozart. In these coming years there will be many prodigies. You will hear a lot about these wonderful children who are coming to the world now.

Prayer: Truth and Religion

In this New Age the hypocrisies of the past will be finished with. The old beliefs will not satisfy children of the New Age. The young will sift to the very bottom whatever is presented to them as spiritual truths. They will not be satisfied to sit at the feet of Masters, but to stand beside them.

A nebulous Heaven will never satisfy them. They want it (as it really is) somewhat like the earth. And when they leave the earth they do not want to "rest in peace," but to go on with their jobs, and they want to know what their opportunities will be.

You, parents of these New Age children, do teach them early about prayer! Let them prove it for themselves. Give them all kinds of things and all kinds of people to pray for. Teach them that they are part of the Family of Christ; that their Father in Heaven sends His angel-messengers and His guides to love them, to be with them and in times of trouble to answer their prayers. A child that forms its life on prayer is in contact with the angel-kingdom. He or she will march through life with courage and hope and the sure knowledge that they will never be alone.... There will always be someone to answer their prayers, someone to hear and to act.

The article above has been reprinted from the January, 1971 issue of BEYOND, the publication of The Seekers in England. The Seekers is a Christian organization that recognizes the power of universal prayer----but more specifically, simultaneous concerted prayer for a given object. Its purpose is the cultivation of prayer in everyday life. Fellowship in Prayer and The Seekers have cooperated for many years.

TRUE PRAYER

Vincent Godfrey Burns

I think the secret of true prayer
Is just to be awake, aware
Of all God's good in which we share. . .

'Tis not some magic telephone
By which we wire to the throne
A list of things we'd like to own. . .

'Tis not a wheel of superstition
Or intellectual erudition
To change our material condition. . .

True prayer is gratitude and praise —
A peace of mind that stays and stays
And fills with hope our nights and days. . .

'Tis a penitent humility,
A longing for integrity,
An undisguised simplicity. . .

'Tis looking upward toward the blue,
A reaching up to heaven's hue —
A hunger for the good and true. . .

Throw wide the windows of your soul
If you would be secure and whole
And so achieve your highest goal. . .

ANOTHER LITTLE STORY FROM A CHILD'S WORLD

Eleanor Ebersole

3/ The Crystal Drop of Rain

Once there was a boy who sat day after day watching the rain run down, down the windowpane. He had an idea that if he could find one drop, just the right one, he would have the greatest treasure in all the world.

The boy watched, with each rainy day, the way the first drops seemed gentle and almost crystal. It was as if they were softly touching the earth to see if it could be trusted. Then more drops, and more drops fell, until they were not drops at all anymore but rain, and puddles, and streams along the sidewalks and curbs.

The boy watched wistfully, each time it rained, for the one clear raindrop that would be his treasure. Sometimes he would cry because of the sadness he felt in his search. His great wish made him feel very lonely, indeed, sometimes.

At night when it rained he would listen, but he was sure that the night raindrops were not his. They were noisy on the roof of his silent house, they clattered. His raindrop would not be like one of those.

As the days and years went by, the boy grew sadder and more lonely. He could not forget his dream. Once he had seen it in his mind, he could not forget the crystal drop of rain. Perhaps this was because he had never seen it with his eyes. Yes! that must be it. Perhaps he did not really know what he was looking for—its size or shape or color. How foolish he was to look for something so strange as that. But he really did know. It was just that he couldn't find it—the raindrop that matched the dream in his mind.

Then one day, much later, he did find it! Of course, as anyone but the boy might have guessed, he found it when the water had turned to ice and then to snow. One morning, after a storm, there on the window with the sun shining through were thousands of crys-

tals glistening in the white light. Each one was more beautiful than the other. But one was the most beautiful yet. It was all he had dreamed, and more. For a moment it was captured upon the pane just long enough for him to see it with his eyes. Before the warmth of the day or the room, or of his own self, could melt the crystal back, he captured it with his eyes. . . . From then on, he no longer cried or searched. His treasure which he had seen only once became the treasure he carried forever inside of his heart.

A GIFT OF GROWING *Alice Mackenzie Swaim*

Sometimes inspired
Beyond your knowing,
You offered me
A gift of growing,
And from the sweetness
Of your face,
Acquaintance with
A spirit's grace,
Your hands more eloquent
A token
Than any words
You might have spoken.

All the flowers of all the tomorrows are in the seeds of today.

THE GRIEVING HEART LEARNS TO LISTEN

Phyllis Malone

How much influence does the revolution of present events have on young people? Does daily prayer for our children play a strong role in where the action is today?

After spending years of intercessory prayer for the needs of our older children, who are just now out of their teens, we have many vivid conclusions in our minds. We have faced and overcome frightening failures in our own young people as well as in ourselves. Parents may also have hangups.

Although there are souls suffering from spiritual poverty throughout the world, God is not dead. Neither is He asleep nor in hiding. He is present in His Holy Temple and ready to be the supplier of our every need. He desires us to ask of Him and to expect results. There are definite turning-points in our lives. If yours has not occurred, it will—with the contribution of a listening heart.

The hush in the omega of the night awakened me. An inner voice, not audible, spoke softly. "Read Deuteronomy 12." I heard it, but I did not grasp it. I promptly fell back into my former slumber. The same happening occurred twice over: "Read Deuteronomy 12. Read Deuteronomy 12." In these instances, I answered, "I'll read it first thing in the morning, Lord." Once again my sense of self took over, and I was asleep Even then my carnal mind was having trouble comprehending the peace of obedience that was being offered.

The next awakening took on a different aspect. There was an overflow of alertness in the room. A glance at the bedside clock told me it was 4:30 A.M. The identical inner voice spoke tenderly: "Read Deuteronomy 12. Read it now." "Do you mean right now, Lord?" I answered. "Why, it's so early. Do you want me to leap out of a warm bed to read the Old Testament?" The compassionate answer was the same: "Read it now."

So I read it. The Holy Spirit quickened two verses. The ninth verse spoke to my heart as if it had been written just for me. It said, "For ye are not yet come to the rest and to the inheritance,

which the Lord your God giveth you." The suggestion of the present tense was dynamic. I saw my inheritance in the process of waiting for me at that very moment. The alpha of my deepest desire for all my children is to be able to watch them walk daily with the Christ. Although I do not see this happening now, my faith in His Word tells me it will be so, God's timing being the final perfection. This conclusion is not directed to only our loved ones. Jesus said, "And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son." (John 14:13)

The first part of the twelfth verse was even more revealing. "And ye shall rejoice before the Lord, ye, and your sons and daughters." I sat in a renewing and thanksgiving silence under the soft glow of lamplight, not wondering at why God so loved me but because He did love me. My God had just made a covenant with me, and I accepted it in the knowledge that He never lies. I felt humble and elated. Regardless of what the future might hold for our children, the assurance of His glory had been given.

Do you wonder why I was positive it was my Lord and not the enemy, when I was first awakened? Do you, too, not know the sweet voice of someone who loves you with depth when he speaks to your heart? Jesus promised us in John 14:17-18 that He would send a comforter, God's Holy Spirit, who would abide with us forever. The Spirit never speaks with tension, harshness, condemnation. He speaks with a constant gentleness, tenderness, and loving guidance. Sometimes in our disobedience we must be dealt with in a negative manner, but even then the Holy Spirit still chastens us with love and kindness, never never taking away our victory in the Lord. We are reminded of John 10:27: "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me." This gives joy to obedience.

Some people feel that God's time is the early morning hours. I feel that God's time is at all times. For me the days must have been too busy, my tongue speeding at too fast a clip, to have a listening heart. My Father had to show me the answer to searching questions by bringing me up out of a sleeping unconsciousness into an awareness of His presence. How many times had He tried to reach me when it was His time but my heart was not listening?

Praise the name of my Heavenly Father for never giving up on His children.

I AM GROWING OLD *Sue LaVerne Christian*

Many years have come and gone,
I am growing old;
I have seen both joy and sorrow,
I am growing old;
I am wiser than before,
I see the joy in loving things,
Both wild and tame;
Youngsters, many have I seen
On the wrong path to life;
Many others the framework of our country;
Yes, I have seen both good and bad
In the many years I have had;
For I am growing old.

WEAVER OF DREAMS *Marie Hogan Transue*

I pick up scattered threads of rainbow,
But rainbows are such transitory things,
Knowing, as they do,
The splendor of universes,
The glory of eternities,
And could not survive in clay-foot bounds;
And so they faded.

But their beauty is not lost,
Only transmuted;
Woven into the woof of my soul-stuff;
Knitted into the dull fabric of life:
Bright tapestried star-dreams for tomorrow.

BROTHERHOOD *Catherine Cabeen Houck*

Love came down as a mantle
wine-red, magically woven.
Falling across man's shoulders,
draping itself into folds,
it spread warmth through his being.
Bone-chilling fears were eased,
dreads and anxieties that had been
piercing and clay-cold
were lessened
and comfort flowed into their
empty spaces.
Seeing one confronting the head-wind
without this sustaining protection
man reached out a hand
and opening the folds
drew his brother in.

TRANQUILITY *Janette Guinn*

Somewhere a wooded glen,
cool and silent solitude;
An altar unto God it speaks again,
Of nature's peaceful quietude.

Soft-hued the fragrant blossoms send
their perfume forth in muted scent,
To consummate the tranquil scene
in nature's sacred covenant.

A trickling brook its cleansing balm,
Flows ever gently on its way;
A silver thread on nature's loom,
This is God's Day.

EASTER MEDITATIONS

Jewel Kirby Fitzhugh

This morning my little niece, blue-eyed and titian-haired, was singing in the clear, sweet voice of childhood a song she had learned in the kindergarten class at Sunday school:

"Allelulia, Jesus lives;
Allelulia, joy He gives;
Allelulia, creatures say,
Allelulia, Easter Day."

To me these simple words expressing the joy and faith brimming in the heart of a child are deeper than much theology of learned seminarians and more meaningful than some ancient creeds.

The Author and Finisher of our faith, revealed through the life, death, and resurrection of our Lord, is alive forevermore. Speaking a universe into being, He was in ascendancy when "the morning stars sang together." Creating order out of chaos, He set the planets in unerring motion around a central, life-giving sun. He called forth light upon the infant world and set the bow of promise in the sky.

The Almighty God, who formed the ocean's wide expanse and the desert vastness, gladdened by an oasis here and there, first knew the secret of the atom and ascertained without computing the distance of the farthest star. He stretched the wide plains that were to become the "bread baskets" of hungry millions. Lifting the rock-ribbed hills, He embedded in their hidden recesses minerals and sparkling gems, storing them away for mankind's future use.

Having made "the earth and all that is therein," the Creator looked upon His work and called it good. Then in His desire for companionship, He created man in His own likeness, trusting him enough to bestow upon him a sovereign will and placing within him the desire to learn and the capacity for finding out things. Who but an all-wise, ever-loving, omnipotent God could have planted

love in the heart of a mother, faith in the soul of an honest man, and trust in the eyes of a child?

The Creator not only provided for man by "making him a little lower than the angels and crowning him with great glory," but also extended concern to His lesser creatures. The broken-winged sparrow does not fall to earth without His notice. To the waterfowl He has given unerring instinct to find its distant home, and to the salmon an inner direction to protected spawning grounds. The life cycle of every creature is guided by an instinct whereby it fulfills the purpose the Creator designed for it.

How tragic that man, who has been granted freedom of will, so often spurns the Master plan. Who but a compassionate Father could have loved the world enough to give His only son to die in agony even for the souls of those who nailed Him to the Cross? Who, I say, except a Father, loving his erring children and longing for their redemption and return? In spite of man's betrayal, God's love is sure.

We can neither fathom the love of God, nor can we flee from His Presence. He is "nearer than breathing and closer than hands and feet." God is not dead because you or I or others in some dark hour may have ceased to be illumined by the steady radiance of His glowing Presence. Rather it is we who may have allowed this to happen, who are dead in a spiritual sense. But the Power that called Lazarus from the grave and broke the bonds of death on the first glad Easter morning can resurrect us from the cold tombs of unbelief. That is, if we are willing.

Some years ago at a retreat which I had the privilege of attending, the campers delighted in singing:

"My God and I, we walk the fields together;
We walk and talk as good friends should and do;
We clasp our hands, our voices ring with laughter;
This earth shall pass and with it common trifles,
But God and I shall go unendingly."

To me these lines express the everlasting Presence of an understanding Father and Divine Friend.

Then there is something deep inside me that asserts the

living Presence of God, the Holy Spirit, whom the Savior promised to send to us. How can I doubt the reality of this Presence when in times of grief I have been strangely comforted; in times of guilt gravely convicted; in times of remorse led to repentance; and have felt the sweet release of forgiveness with the joy of beginning again? Surely in experiences like these the Holy Spirit is bearing witness with my human spirit that God is present and that He loves me.

It is for this reason that I do not succumb to despair and unbearable loneliness when I contemplate the sorrows and cruelties of today's world. There is hope, born of the belief that God the Father Almighty not only planned an orderly universe but also a world in which moral laws are as binding as physical laws. In such a world, "Truth crushed to the earth shall rise again." Right instead of might must ultimately prevail.

It is the Power of the Omnipresent Spirit that enables me to be at peace with myself; to feel compassion for the woes of others; to forgive as I should like to be forgiven; and, though imperfectly still, to view the world through love-filled eyes.

As I contemplate the vastness of infinity and then the love of God—His omnipotence and omnipresence—, I bow my soul in awe and reverence, knowing in my inmost being that *God is* and that "He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him." He is a part of me, yet over and around and beyond me. He is the Creator, I am the creature. My heart is lifted to Him in the joys and sorrows of life, its triumphs and defeats, its revelations and perplexities, and I cry with Thomas of old, "My Savior and my God."

IMAGINATION *Lillian Hammer*

The world is a fragment
Of man's imagination;
Man — the seed
Of God's creation.

THE HEART'S SUNLIGHT

Hope is one of man's most valuable gifts. It blesses everything within its reach and sustains the soul in the darkest hours with unfailing strength. Hope is the heart's sunlight. The brighter hope burns the brighter it reflects upon the world, and putting its shine on another's face is to put the shine upon your own.

Be still and listen —
someone, somewhere faintly calls. . .
a brother in need.

---*Marion J. Richardson*

ON A THRUSH FLYING

Howard G. Hanson

He cannot sing of liberty
to those whose deadened ears disdain
the craving human needs deny,
the yearnings human acts *will* stain,

but him who wears his yoke of flesh
in pride upon his soul's frail form
and from each failing rises fresh
to strain new heights despite the worm,

to him whose grandeur prides the cry
that flesh and bone can stretch the soul,
asserting man's entirety;
God sings to him whom hope makes whole.

I TOOK THE TIME TO PRAY

Pearl L. Kirk

Many times I have found
The need to look above,
I could not face each day
Without His tender love.

There I gained belief
So many times a day,
In peace, my hand in His
I took the time to pray.

A STUDY OF PRAYER

The Fellowship's new pamphlet—based on the experiences of fifty-some volunteers—pictures the spiritual life being led by men and women in our own country in our own times. The pamphlet contains a summarizing introduction to the study, which was held between June and December of 1970, as well as the daily records, final reports, and correspondence of ten who participated throughout the six-month period.

A copy of this pamphlet will be mailed, without charge, to all members of the Fellowship.

"A New Song" by Pat Boone (Creation House, 1970). The Psalmist declared: "Sing unto the Lord a new song!" That was precisely the conviction of Pat Boone as he emerged from the depths of despair some years ago. This honest and sincere testimony of a man who has 'fundamentalist' leanings does have meaning for some of us today. Although his message is a bit simplistic and the way in which he manifests his convictions rather naive (baptizing the unchurched in his very own Hollywood swimming pool), the reader will confront a man of faith who seeks to make his faith part of the fabric of everyday life.

"Woman At The Well" by Dale Evans Rogers (Fleming Revell, 1969). A more mature and reflective experience seems to have been the lot of Dale Evans Rogers. She ran the gamut of traumatic encounters, but retained enough positive thinking to enable her to come to terms with a severe anxiety centering on the problem of death. She, too, knows the dangers of a broken home, and the miracle is that her son bears none of the traces of his unfortunate childhood. "See I have set before you life and good; death and evil. Therefore choose life that thou and thy children may live." Dale Rogers and her beloved Roy have followed this command. In this they are truly blessed.

"Ten Rungs" by Martin Buber (Harper & Row). "There is no rung of being on which the holiness of God is not present at all times," wrote an unknown Hasidic saint. Martin Buber uses this as the basis of a beautiful small book which consists of explanations of some of the best-loved Hasidic sayings. This is pure wisdom, well translated and relevant to all who strive to be God's partners here on earth.

OTHER BOOKS

"Shipshape Honeymoon Diary" by Aarno and Frona Davidson (Brinck Book Co., Escondido, California 92025). The charming

account—composed in quatrains by the bride and groom—of their forty-day honeymoon trip on the Pacific by poets now well known to readers of FIP. The Davidsons sent an autographed copy for the Fellowship library.

"The Creation of Death And Life" by Rachel H. King (Philosophical Library). The insights of modern science and how they can be used in a fundamentally Christian understanding of the world. Complex but readable by interested laymen.

"Encounter With World Religions" by Robert D. Young (Westminster Press). Recommendations to Christian churches about ways of creating real dialogues with other faiths. For the experts only.

"Choice Points. Essays On The Emotional Problems Of Living With People" by John C. Glidewell (The MIT Press). Vivid and very readable studies of such human attitudes as dependency and dependability, such instincts as to fight or take flight, such feelings as love sought and love offered.

"Dictionary Of Pagan Religions" by Harry E. Wedeck and Wade Baskin (Philosophical Library). Both handy and fascinating to pick up and page through.

****

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Prayer at its highest is a two-way conversation — and for me the most important part is listening to God's replies.

— *Frank C. Laubach*

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